



WorkFirst Handbook - Revised ~~10/1/2002~~ 2/1/2003

Red Banner – Early Exit Bonuses ended 2/1/03 – Effective 2/1/03, you may only authorize the second early exit bonus of \$500, and only to persons who received their first \$500 payment on or before 1/31/03.

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Legal References:

- RCW 74.08.090 & 74.04.050
- [WAC 388-310-0800](#)
- [WAC 388-310-1600](#)
- Public Law 104-193 Sec. 407

What are early exit bonuses?

A TANF/SFA early exit bonus ~~is~~ **was** a one-time (once in a lifetime) WorkFirst support service payment of \$1,000 to cover work and work-related expenses. It ~~is~~ **was** available to participants who receive \$100 or less in TANF/SFA and voluntarily terminates from assistance. Only DSHS case managers can authorize early exit bonuses.

The early exit bonus of \$1000 ~~is~~ **was** paid in two installments. The first \$500 ~~is~~ **was** paid in the month after closure of the TANF/SFA case. The second \$500 payment ~~is~~ **was** made in the 4th month after the TANF/SFA case is closed. The participant must still be employed to receive the second payment.

The early exit bonus ~~was ended effective January 31, 2003. Participants who received their first \$500 installment on or before 1/31/03 may qualify for their second \$500 installment. helps participants by saving months of TANF/SFA eligibility for times of greater need. It also provides a financial boost to meet work and work-related expenses and helps the participant stay independent of TANF/SFA.~~

Who is eligible for an early exit bonus?

~~Effective January 31, 2003, A~~ **Effective January 31, 2003, participants do not** ~~qualifies~~ **qualify** for the first \$500 of the early exit bonus ~~if she or he meets all the conditions below:~~

- ~~—Is an adult,~~
- ~~—Is working in an unsubsidized job (no minimum hours of employment required), or a qualifying subsidized job (not subsidized with TANF/SFA funds and subsidy does not end when TANF/SFA~~

If receiving a low TANF/SFA grant, participants might choose to “bank” months of TANF/SFA for times of greater need. Remind these participants of what supports they can receive after they leave TANF without affecting their 60-month limit for TANF/SFA cash aid.

- ~~grant is closed such as Americorps.)~~
- ~~Will be receiving a TANF/SFA grant of \$100 or less,~~
 - ~~▪ Is not included in a sanctioned assistance unit, and~~
 - ~~▪ Has never received an early exit bonus before.~~

~~A few other rules apply to who can receive an early exit bonus:~~

- ~~—TANF/SFA applicants can only receive an early exit bonus after they go on assistance and receive at least one TANF/SFA grant.~~
- ~~—Current TANF/SFA participants can voluntarily terminate assistance before they receive the “\$100 or less TANF/SFA grant” payment (to receive the exit bonus sooner) as long as they verify that their income will push their TANF/SFA grant down to the required level.~~
- ~~—Both parents of a two parent household may receive a bonus (for a total of one each in a lifetime) if both are working in unsubsidized jobs or qualifying subsidized jobs. If they both choose the bonus, neither will be eligible for an early exit bonus again, even if he or she moves into a different assistance unit.~~
 - ~~▪ The TANF/SFA participants must have a plan on how they will be able to live on their salary and stay of TANF/SFA. The success plan is one example.~~



How does an exit bonus affect other benefits?

As shown in the chart below, when a participant receives an early exit bonus and exits TANF/SFA, other supports are unaffected. See "Effect of Early Exit Bonus on Other Types of Assistance" for more information.

In addition, unlike Diversion benefits, a person can go back on TANF/SFA after receiving an early exit bonus, without any overpayments or requirements to repay the bonus. Be sure to tell the participant about continued eligibility for medical, food stamps and other public assistance benefits.

<i>Post-TANF supports</i>	<i>Affect (of exit bonus)</i>
Food assistance	Benefits may increase slightly
WCCC (child care)	(or a slightly lower child care
Medicaid and child support	Like others who exit TANF/SFA, Medicaid can continue and the

Post-Employment Services benefits (like WorkFirst support services, success coach, retention services and education benefits)	child support payments. Participant is eligible on the same basis as all others who exit TANF/SFA.
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Authorizing payments

~~You will find participants who may qualify for the early exit bonus during eligibility reviews or other participant contacts.~~
 Participants who received their first \$500 installment of the early exit bonus on or before 1/31/03 may qualify for the second \$500 installment. There are special payment procedures used if a participant opts for the bonus. (A voucher is not needed to process the Early Exit Bonus.)

For the first \$500 installment of the Early Exit Bonus

~~The early exit bonus cannot be authorized any sooner than the first of the month following grant termination.~~

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~~On the first of the month following closure, you can approve the early exit bonus (called a "transitional work expense" support service), process the payment following the local office payment model for e-JAS vouchers.~~

For the second \$500 installment of the Early Exit Bonus

An ad hoc report is available to produce a list of all clients who received the first installment but not the second. The worker will need to check that the participant is still working and issue the payment in the fourth month after the closure of the TANF/SFA case.

If the client is not working or returns to TANF/SFA, then the client is not eligible for the second \$500. They may qualify for the second \$500 if they re-exit and are employed after three months.

Early exit bonuses – Step-by-step guide



- 1) ~~The DSHS case manager identifies participants who are potentially eligible for an exit bonus and sends them an early exit bonus marketing letter and documents the action taken.~~
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- 2) ~~If contacted by a participant who wants to voluntarily terminate from TANF/SFA and receive the bonus, the case manager will:~~
 - a) ~~Verify that the participant is:~~

- i) ~~An adult;~~
- ii) ~~Working in an unsubsidized job or qualifying subsidized job;~~
- iii) ~~Receiving a \$100 or less TANF/SFA grant;~~
- iv) ~~Not in a sanctioned assistance unit; and~~
- v) ~~Receiving an early exit bonus for the first time.~~

b) Talk to the participant about how she or he plans to use the early exit bonus, emphasizing that it is a once-in-a-lifetime payment and is intended for work expenses.

c) ~~Reviews the participant's plan for staying off TANF/SFA and documents the plan;~~

d) ~~Close TANF/SFA in ACES using the 557 code (client request), which will cause ACES to automatically continue CN medical (F04) for 12 months from the last review.~~

e) ~~Ensure there is a FT or PT component on the e-JAS component code screen and that employment is entered on the employment screen.~~

f) ~~Set up an e-JAS follow-up message as a reminder to make the early exit bonus payment at the beginning of the next month (after TANF/SFA is closed in ACES).~~

g) Notify the child care worker and ESD that the participant has exited TANF/SFA, as appropriate for retention services.

3) ~~Once TANF/SFA is terminated, the case manager~~For participants who have received their first \$500 installment on or before January 31, 2003, the case manager:

a) ~~Enters PT or FT on the Component screen and P or F on the Employment screen in e-JAS.~~

b) ~~Authorizes the bonus in e-JAS following local office policy ("71" for the first installment or "72" for the second installment and processes the payment following the local office payment model); documents the action; and~~

c) ~~Sends a notice to the participant that the early exit bonus has been authorized. A sample award letter has been created.~~

d) Authorizes the second payment after receiving the automated e-JAS e-mail in the fourth month after

checking that the client is still working, the TANF is still closed, has an active PT or FT on the Component screen and has F or P on the employment screen.

4) On a monthly basis run this ad hoc to determine whom may qualify for the second payment:

- a) In JAS enter WFR.
- b) Press F6 for Adhoc.
- c) Press F5 for pre-created reports.
- d) Select the preferred report (worker, CSO, Region, or State) and TANF
- e) Mark the Early Exit Bonus Recipient field with an X and press enter.
- f) Mark with an I (Include) the 71 (First \$500 EEB issued) field.
- g) Press enter.
- h) This report will provide all recipients of the sub-cat 71.
- i) Issue the second payment on any case that is still employed in the fourth month and is still off TANF/SFA and document the action.

Resources

Related WorkFirst Handbook Chapters/Attachments

- [Supports - Overview](#)
- [Paid and Unpaid Employment](#)

Other Resources

- [Early Exit Bonus Marketing Letter](#)
- [Early Exit Bonus Award Letter](#)

